

To the Right Honourable, the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesſes in the
PARLIAMENT aſſembled.

The humble Petition of the Commoners, Myners, Free-holders, and other the Inhabitants in the Foreſt of Dean, in the County of Glouceſter and Hereford,

SHE W E T H,

That your Petitioners have a clear, and undoubted right to have Common of Paſture, and Common of Eſtovers, within the Foreſt of *Dean*.

That theſe have many Rights, Cuſtomes, and Priviledges belonging unto them; as Myners, for ſearching of Mines, ſinking of Pits in any place whatſoever, within the ſayd Foreſt: And that the Conſtable, Gavilers, and Verdurers of the ſayd Foreſt ought to hold Courts once every two Weeks, and once in every forty dayes, where the ſayd Conſtable, Gaviler, and Verdurers ought upon request to aſſign Timber to the ſayd Myners for Supportation of their Mynes; and if the ſayd Verdurers ſhall reſuſe, or neglect the aſſigning of ſuch Timber as ſhall be convenient: That then the ſayd Myners may, and by their Priviledges and Cuſtomes time out of mind, ought, of right to ſell and carry to their Gale place, for the Supportation of their Mynes, what Timber ſhall be neceſſary.

That the Foundation of this Right is an ancient Preſcription, preſented by ſeverall Regarders of the Foreſt, and time out of mind allowed and enjoyed accordingly, and was further ſetled by a Decree at the Suit of the Commoners in the Exchequer, and ſtands confirmed in the late Act of Perambulation in 17. Car.

For which and other their Rights and Priviledges, your Petitioners have, and do ſtill pay Heriots. And do pay unto his Highneſſe Court of Exchequer, and other Officers, a conſiderable yearly Rent, commonly called *Swine Silver*, *Mark mony*, and *Gale*, and have accordingly in many ages paſt, in the Reign of King *James*, King *Charles*, and his late Highneſſe the Lord Proteſtor enjoyed the ſame, they having been alwaies faithfull to, and for the Common-wealth of England.

Notwithſtanding all which, *John Wade* Eſq; upon ſeveral pretences and miſ-conſtructions of an Act paſſed the late Parliament, entituled, *An Act for the mitigation of the rigor of the Foreſt Laws*, &c. The ſayd *Jo. Wade* doth by a violent and Arbitrary power, where he is an Officer of the power of the Foreſt intruſted for the good of your Petitioners, delude and defraud them of their Rights, and in other caſes doth by force hinder them of their Rights, and takes from them their Priviledges, by debarring them from Timber and Wood for the ſupport of Cole-works, and Iron-Oare-Works, and from digging Quarries of Stone in the Waſtes of the Foreſt. Nevertheleſſe he driveth on a Cole-myne himſelf, in which he ſpendeth more of the Foreſt-timber in one year then the Country did in two years, by debarring them of their Common of Eſtovers, by depriving your Petitioners of their Common of Herbage and Pannage in ſeveral parts of the Foreſt, inſomuch that he hath kept the Inhabitants from coming to water their Cattell in the Common, hath deſtroyed the Wells where the people ſetched water for their neceſſary occaſions, hath digged up their waſhing Troughs, and cleaved them to Cordwood, & hath killed many mens Cattell.

That under pretence and miſ-conſtruction of the Act for mitigating the Foreſt-Laws, never were Foreſt-Laws executed with more cruelty, and Arbitrarineſſe, by Imprifoning ſome for taking up a bundle of Chips not worth a Penny, others for breaking ſmal ſprigs of Holly not worth a Farthing, others for cutting Fern to cover their houſes, others for cutting of Goſſe, by threatening to take away poor mens Coal, if they wil not give him what Compoſition he pleaſeth, by threatening poor people to have the Tenth of all their Labors; And that he will enforce thoſe who live on the Commons ſide, to turn the doors of their houſes, ſo as they may not come out into the Common. That the ſayd *John Wade* contrary to a Decree in the Exchequer, under a pretence and miſ-conſtruction of the Act for mitigating the Foreſt-Laws, hath inſtead of incloſing one third of the ſayd Foreſt, incloſed the one half of the ſayd Foreſt. Theſe and many ſuch like things doth the ſayd *John Wade* act, with an high hand upon your poor Petitioners, to the utter ruine of ſome hundreds of Families.

Wherefore your Petitioners moſt humbly pray, that your Honors will be pleaſed to take the Premifſes into your ſerious Conſiderations, and grant your Petitioners a certain day wherein they may make proof of what they here alledge, that ſo by your favor and Juſtice for the future, your Petitioners may enjoy their Rights, Cuſtomes, and Priviledges, and the Violaters of them receive ſuch Conſign Punishment, as to your Juſtice ſhall ſeem meet, whereby many hundreds will be kept from ſtarving, who now are expoſed to all kind of Hazard and Ruine.

*This is a true Copy. Jo. Smith Clerk of the
Parliament to attend the Commons.*

And they ſhall ever pray, &c.

Thursday the 07 of April, 1659. At the Grand Committee for Grievances and Courts of Juſtice.

The humble Petition of the Commoners, Myners, Free-holders, and other the Inhabitants in the Foreſt of *Dean*, in the County of Glouceſter and Hereford was this day read.

ORDERED,

That *John Wade* Eſq; be ſummoned to appeare on Wednesday come three weeks, before the Committee, to make his defence to this Petition, And that a Copy of this Petition be delivered to Mr. *Wade* in the mean time, and that Counſell, and Witneſſes be then heard upon the merits of the Matters contained in the ſayd Petition.

John Smith Clerk of the Parliament to attend the Commons.